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Now

## THE DISTINCTION

Of Nature from Hypostasis, and of Person from Faces

From the Book that is called

## Harmonious Texture

Of our teacher Yohannān Bar Zō'bī, done at the request of Mār 'Abdishō'  
Metropolitan of Assyria

The Syriac text from this document is from [Joseph Kelaita, Margānītā, 1924, pp. 98-106.](#)

The English text from this document is from [Mar Eshai Shimun, The Pearl, 1965, pp. 82-91.](#)

**[82]** Nature is distinguishable from hypostasis, by its essential qualities. Nature is universal but hypostasis is specific. When nature is divided it constitutes its species and also its hypostasis. But when hypostasis is divided it is destroyed and rendered meaningless; because if you were to divide hypostasis into parts, it will be destroyed and rendered meaningless, and it will not retain its natural qualities.

Nature is simple, but hypostasis is compounded. Hypostasis is visible to the eyes, but nature is visible to the mind. When you speak of nature, the mind encompasses all, but when you speak of hypostasis, the mind embraces only one. This is the difference O, Father, between the nature and the hypostasis.

[98] قَدِمْتُ إِحْدَى حَتَّى جِي مَهْضَا: تَجْزَعُهُمْ  
 وَهَاجِبِي حَتَّى إِحْدَى كَعْنَتِي هَ: مَهْضَا دِم  
 تَجْزَعُهُمْ هَ: حَتَّى إِحْدَى ضَلَّ دِمِي فُكِلِي:  
 مَعْنَى لَنْ يَجِدَ نَفْ كَعْنَتِي. مَهْضَا دِم ضَلَّ  
 دِمِي فُكِلِي: يَمِيتُهُ يَمِيتُك. يَمِيتُك دِم  
 مَقْلِبُ نَعْمَ هَ: كَعْنَتِي كَعْنَتِي.  
 يَمِيتُهُ يَمِيتُك: هَكَذَا نَعْمَ حَتَّى  
 مَد.

[illegible]

[83] Let us now speak of the difference that exists between person and hypostasis. Person<sup>1</sup> is unlike hypostasis in the qualities which it possesses, namely, such as beautiful, hateful, hideous and black. But in hypostasis there is only one (attribute), for it is one and the same. But in person there are many, because of the many attributes that it possesses. Of qualities I mean, son of so and so, beautiful or ugly. These characteristics appertain to person, that which signifies hypostasis. Hypostasis has been spoken of as a small part of nature. Person has been spoken of as a small part of hypostasis. This is therefore the difference between hypostasis and person.

[illegible]

Let us now speak on the difference between face and person. Person is different from face in that it does not possess the concrete image of the mind. Face is impressed (concrete), but person is not concrete. Person is a small part

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<sup>1</sup> In Greek, qnomā is called 'hypostasis': it shows its existence and by it, nature is known. And of paršopā, 'prosonon' is what it is named. For us easterners, we confess this: that Christ our Lord, is two natures in one person, the Son of God. When the question of Divinity and Humanity is brought into the midst, in order so as to distinguish the natural properties of each nature, then of necessity we are led to the discussion of qnomā by which the nature is distinguished. And from this, henceforth, it is shown in truth of two qnomē preserving the properties of the natures, in one person of the Son of God.

[illegible]

of hypostasis in which it is set. Face is a small part of the person in which it is set. Person is outstanding in the hypostasis of which it is a part. But face is not outstanding in the person of which it is a part. Face denotes person, but he (person) cannot denote the face. Person denotes hypostasis, but hypostasis does not do the same. And hypostasis denotes nature, but nature does not do the same. Nature contains hypostasis, for it belongs thereto in entirety. Hypostasis likewise contains person, for it belongs to it in entirety. And person contains the face which is impressed (situated) in the tower of [84] senses. This is, therefore, the difference of these four expressions.

Let us now demonstrate the facts concerning each one of them - nature in the manner of man, hypostasis in the manner of Adam. Of person as beautiful, as of the age of thirty three years. And the face which is concrete impression of this image, is the manifestation of his person.

Person in like manner is divided into its four divisible species, as it has been divided by the Holy Father Mar Timātē'os. All the objects that exist in the world, possess person. Some of them possess both hypostasis and person.

[illegible][illegible]

فَذِيهِ هُفٌ لِّدِيهِمْ فُكُلٌ: لِدِيهِمْ ذِيْجَةٌ  
فُكُلٌ: لِيُفَضِّلَ دُفُلِيْهِ فُجُبٌ: لِيُجِوْهُ فُضْ  
هَبْعُهُمْ. مَلَّ رَجُلُهُمْ دُجِبُ حُلُلُهُمْ:  
لِيُجَذِّبَهُمْ حُلُومٌ فُذِيْهِ هُفٌ. يَصُومُ  
مُفَضِّلٌ هَفَذِيْهِ هُفٌ: تَهْذِيْبٌ مَلُومٌ.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

55 : 5 : 2 14









In that case our human nature is united to the person of the Word, and is the exalted temple to the Holy Trinity. For in as much as the name Father does not indicate its essence, but it only indicates and imprints (on mind) the hypostasis. Likewise the name Word does not indicate its essence, but it only indicates and imprints the name of hypostasis. For this reason the gospel which was preached throughout the world, was ascribed to the Word<sup>o</sup> when speaking of incarnation, and not in the name of God which indicates the essence. But in the name of the Word which indicates the hypostasis.

[103] مَلُوبُ خَنْتَنُ دِيئِب: لَقْدِيهَقْ دِيئَلْ  
 مَلُوبُ مَسْمُومُ شَخْلُ دِيئَن: دِيئَن:  
 دِيئَلْ مَلُوبُ هَلِيْدِيْ. دِيئَن دِيئَن دِيئَن:  
 كِه مَلُوبُ مَسْمُومُ مَسْمُومُ كُ. دِيْ كِيْ  
 دِيئَمَسْمُومُ: مَسْمُومُ كُ مَسْمُومُ. شَخْلُ  
 دِيئَن دِيئَلْ: كِه مَلُوبُ مَسْمُومُ مَسْمُومُ كُ.  
 دِيْ كِيْ كِيْ دِيئَمَسْمُومُ: مَسْمُومُ كُ مَسْمُومُ  
 مَسْمُومُ. مَلُوبُ دِيئَن هَلِيْدِيْ: مَسْمُومُ دِيئَن  
 دِيئَلْ. دِيئَن دِيئَلْ<sup>22</sup> دِيئَمَسْمُومُ:  
 دِيئَن دِيئَمَسْمُومُ. كِه دِيْ دِيئَن  
 دِيئَلْ: مَسْمُومُ مَسْمُومُ مَسْمُومُ. دِيْ دِيئَن  
 مَسْمُومُ دِيئَلْ: دِيئَمَسْمُومُ دِيئَمَسْمُومُ.

For if the [88] Word<sup>n</sup> became flesh, and the name Word is indicative of hypostasis, and the hypostasis is indicative of the person which is symbol thereof; then it follows that the flesh was united to the person of the hypostasis of the Word. In which case the Word the only begotten of the Father, expressed His image in the flesh, and He likewise imprinted the flesh which He took by the name of His Essence and Authority. It united with and also conjoined the living and rational flesh, the Person of the Word is the Son, who is distinct from the Father and the

[illegible]

<sup>10</sup> John 13.

<sup>11</sup> John 1:14.





person of Fatherhood. And the Son is likewise the Son, and He is neither the Father nor the Spirit, and He is distinct from the Father and the Spirit in the person of Sonship. And the Holy Spirit is Spirit and He is neither the Son nor the Father, and He is distinct from the Son and from the Father in the person of His proceeding.

[illegible]

In the attributes of nature there is no distinction in His hypostases, they are all equal in attributes natural and general. For the natural attributes are proper to all of them, namely, spirit, everlastingness, nature, divinity, lordship, judgship, authority, boundlessness, creativeness, administrativeness and immortality, etc. These are the attributes of hypostases and appertain thereto distinctively. But the attributes of nature appertain to hypostases in general, therefore, in the attributes of nature there is complete equality. Neither the Father precedes the Son, nor the Son precedes the Holy Spirit, nor is the Father greater than the Son, nor the Son from the Holy Spirit.

[illegible]

Let, therefore, Sebalieus be ashamed and let Arius be confounded. For only in the attributes of person does precedence exist; for the Father is the cause and the Son and the Spirit caused. In like manner in the order of counting; the Son and the Spirit follow.

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But let him who is already so convinced of what we have just said know, that his conclusion [91] is incorrect as to the real meaning of this statement. For the Father is the cause of the attributes of His own persons, but He is not the cause of the hypostases, for if this were so it would tear asunder the unity. And the order of the numbers is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is not in the hypostases that the precedence and separateness is effected but rather in the reckoning of the attributes of the persons. It is the Manichaens who reckon according to the order of precedence.

The Holy Trinity is not subject to numbers, or numbering appertains to conscious objects only, which by their very nature have a time limit, place, and are bounded. But the Holy Trinity is without time or place. For the first number is automatically followed by the second, and the third is likewise followed by the fourth. But in the case of the worshipful Trinity, the second does not follow the first, nor is the second by the third in a series of succession. But one Father one Son one Holy Spirit incessantly, three hypostases one nature, and one nature three hypostases. I confess in one God who is in three hypostases, He that created all from nothing and He governs and manages all.

[illegible][illegible]